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OCT 16 1995

FCC MAIL ROOM

By signing this letter of petition, I express my profound concern over the effects of television violence, sex, and vulgarity. I ask the FCC to take a very strong stand in turning back the tide of destructive influences that are flooding American homes and minds.

NAME

*Don Carlson, Representative  
Washington State Legislature*

I am in agreement with the Academy  
for Family TV. The FCC must  
find a way to dramatically decrease  
the violence and vulgarity on TV.

Leslie Jink  
Claudia Bond  
Lynn Melker  
Lynn Nyland  
Mary Thornton  
Lutz A. Miller  
Jenne Puente  
Ann Skordahl  
Lester Ryan  
Janie Rulli  
Carol E. Collins  
Karen O'Sullivan  
Mary E. Russell  
B. Marilyn Hannah  
Ruth Moises  
Cinda Redman

By signing this letter of petition, I express my profound concern over the effects of television violence, sex, and vulgarity. I ask the FCC to take a very strong stand in turning back the tide of destructive influences that are flooding American homes and minds.

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Jeanne Schaefer

Charles B. Duff

Roy B. Hurlburt

Theodore R. Ahlberg

Glenn Baldwin Jr

Dorothy S. Wilson

Larry R. Martin

William Blum

Merrell R. Darnay

Dolores M. Doug

James H. Douglas

Dora C. Cook

Carol Heulin

R. L. Hunkeler

Larry R. Martin

John S. Sturrock

Glenn A. Baldwin Jr

September 27, 1995

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Mr. Reed Hundt, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 "M" St., NW  
Washington, DC 20544

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OCT 16 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Re: MM Docket No. 93-48

Dear Mr. Hundt:

I would like to register our opposition to further changes in the children's television rules in the strongest possible terms. This station, like most stations, has increased the amount of children's informational and educational programs broadcast and plans to continue to find new ways to serve the interests of the children in our coverage area. The current FCC rules are resulting in significantly increased children's informational and instructional programming.

This television station is one of six full power signals received by homes in our DMA, there are several low power TV signals, the largest cable system here presently provides 70 channels, Ameritech will shortly be serving this area as a cable TV provider with a large number of channels distributed over their fibre-optic network, two Direct Service Satellite, (DSS) services are already in place and three more will shortly be in service, all of which, when added to the rapidly expanding videotape, videodisc, computer network and other interactive media provide a plethora of choices for children's viewing and active participation.

This whole initiative seems to be a classic example of response to an issue when changing events make that response no longer appropriate. Research shows that children, given the option, will most frequently choose entertainment over instructional and informational material. Today's children in a cable household have as many as 14 choices of children's programs in a single time period in our community. In that kind of environment the commission's target programming is going to be largely ignored in favor of the more attractive entertainment programs, computer games and interactive media available. It is for this reason we have strongly advocated the use of educational and informational short program elements integrated in regular entertainment programs as the most effective means of reaching children. Short segment programming may be the most important programming for kids, yet it is not given proper credit under existing and proposed rules.

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614-895-2000

614-895-3159

614-794-4320

P.O. BOX 280  
COLUMBUS OH 43216-0280

6130 SUNDURY ROAD  
WESTERVILLE OH 43081

It also seems wrong that commercial television broadcasters should be required to carry the entire financial burden of this educational, and informational effort, which will be the net effect if commercial broadcasters are required to air these programs while alternative media can continue to provide simultaneous entertainment programs. Not only will commercial broadcasters bear the burden of program costs for material which will find little audience, the loss of childrens audience to other entertainment media will result in substantially reduced revenues and could pose a severe hardship, especially for some UHF stations. With the acceleration of media fragmentation, the broadcast stations and television networks will increasingly find themselves squeezed between lower revenues caused by loss of audience and ever increasing operating expenses.

For these reasons and others, broadcast television should not be subjected to quantitative standards of children's informational and instructional programming. The whole concept of government dictation of programming on broadcast television is contrary to the intent of the first amendment and with the absences of limited distribution capability made obsolete by cable, satellite, video tape and discs, and interactive computer technologies, no longer justifiable by any other criteria..

All of us have a strong concern for the media exposure of children and the nature of the media to which they are exposed but, it should be apparent that broadcast television can no longer be the sole delivery system to be considered in a balanced solution for all of our children's media concerns. Many of these media are outside the ability of even government to control. Inescapable is the basic fact that parents, now more than ever, have to control media in their households for their families. The government and the broadcast industry cannot provide the solution which our people desire without sacrificing our basic liberties.

It is our sincere hope that the commission will make no further changes in these areas of concern until the industry and mass communications media changes already initiated have had their effect on the public, and the mass communications marketplace.

Sincerely,



John T. Quigley, General Manager

JTQ/dp

CC: Commissioners Quelo, Barrett, Ness, Chang

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OCT 16 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

October 2, 1995

Andrew Berrett  
Commissioner,  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Berrett,

Parents today need all the help they can get to raise their children in a safe and stable society. Their responsibility is made far more difficult because of the violence with which their children are bombarded constantly on T.V. Pliable young minds are sadly influenced by the savagery, cruelty, and brutality to which they are exposed while viewing various shows.

We ask you to please consider reducing the amount of violence on T.V. Your decisions will impact on our children markedly. Yours is a profound responsibility. You are in a position to establish regulations to better society as a whole by providing a healthier use of the airways. Let T.V. help the youth of America to establish high values now, in order that they will then become quality productive citizens in the future.

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Respectfully,

*Velma H. Heston*

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OCT 16 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

October 2, 1995

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Federal Communications Commission  
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Respectfully,

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Betty Mc Mullen

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OCT 16 1995

OCTOBER 11, 1995  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

AS YOU REVIEW THE CHILDRENS TELEVISION ACT, I URGE YOU TO REQUIRE BROADCASTERS TO OFFER, AT THE VERY LEAST, THREE (3) HOURS EACH WEEK OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS. THESE PROGRAMS ARE VERY IMPORTANT. THEY NOT ONLY FULFILL THE DESIRE THAT MY FOUR YEAR OLD NEPHEW HAS TO WATCH TV, BUT ALSO HELPS HIM LEARN AT THE SAME TIME. AS MY OWN TEN MONTH OLD DAUGHTER COMES CLOSER TO "TELEVISION AGE" I REALIZE WHAT AN IMPORTANT ISSUE THIS IS. THE CHILDREN OF TODAY REALLY ARE THE FUTURE OF TOMORROW AND WE NEED LOTS OF GOOD EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS ON TELEVISION.

SINCERELY YOURS,

*Joyce Fagan*

JOYCE FAGAN  
3608 VAN DALE ST  
DELTONA FL 32738

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*[Signature]*

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93-48

October 2, 1995

Andrew Berrett  
Commissioner,  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

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Respectfully,

*(Mrs.) Meta A. Harrison*

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October 2, 1995

Andrew Berrett  
Commissioner,  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

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Respectfully,

*Louis W. Edwards*

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## EVERETT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 2

Educational Service Center

OCT 6 1995

BOX 2098 • 4730 COLBY AVENUE • EVERETT, WASHINGTON 98203 • (206) 339-4200

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Superintendent

October 10, 1995

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
1919 M Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

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OCT 16 1995

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

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93-48

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As parents and members of the Board of Directors of the Everett School District, Everett Washington, we would like to offer our comments to the FCC regarding implementation and possible changes to the Children's Television Act.

We urge commissioners to require responsible programming of our nation's broadcasters. The airwaves do, indeed, belong to the public and federal regulation of certain aspects of the use of the public's resource is most appropriate. Children and families today are subject to a range of violent and sexually explicit programming never before witnessed in our country.

It is not enough to passively suggest that parents should simply turn off the TV when something arises that is not appropriate for children. Parents often do not have that choice and not because they are negligent, but because the pressures of modern life prohibit 24-hour scrutiny of children's activities.

Reasonable regulation of commercial programming during prime-time hours is within the purview of the FCC's role and should be exercised. With reasonable regulation should come a commitment of enforcement. It is not enough to "encourage" or "recommend" that the industry "try" to limit unacceptable programming.

We are not suggesting that freedom of speech or expression be abridged in this request. We are requesting that the FCC require that the television industry use reasonable restraint in what they choose to carry during "family" viewing time.

On behalf of the 17,000 children in our schools, we urge you to act responsibly and to use the authority you have to help stem this tide. We are becoming a nation of desensitized people no longer able to sort fact, vulgarity, and violence from truth, good taste, and respect for human life.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Nesse  
Legislative Liaison  
Everett School District  
Board of Directors

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October 6, 1995

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

Commissioners Hundt, Chong, Quello, Barrett, and Ness  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street NW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioners:

The commission is considering efforts to increase the quantity and quality of educational and informational programs intended for children on television. Very little has resulted from the Children's Television Act of 1990. It is important to create for the public good and public interest a set of standards for the television industry that *serve children*. Young children watch on the average 27 hours of television or more weekly. Good programming such as "CRO" can and did achieve good audience ratings. However, "CRO" has been dropped from ABC's Saturday morning shows. We urge the following things be considered by the commission:

1. No less than 3 hours of children's programming per week and rising to 5 hours by the year 2000.
2. Define children's programming that is specifically designed to educate or inform children, and which is aired between 7:00am and 10:00pm.
3. Prohibit trading or taking credit for hours already being aired on PBS or other stations.

The television industry is being given an open hand in the new Telecommunications Act which is generally deregulating the industry. It is time for them to be responsible corporate citizens and think of the public good as well as public goods for sale to the highest bidder. Television is more influential in many children's lives than school. *The least we can ask for is responsible programming.*

Sincerely,

*Antoinette H. Lewis*

Antoinette H. Lewis  
502/564-4606  
502/695/2878

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*C*

October 16, 1995

RE: "MM Docket 93-48"

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
1919 "M" Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

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OCT 16 1995  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY

To Whom It May Concern:

Attached please find *The Youth and Violence Study* that the Clark County League of Women Voters in the State of Washington, did last year. There is information in this study pertaining to violence in the media and its portrayal in newspapers, movies, television, etc. In addition, in Clark County this year, an organization called the Academy for Family Television in the SW Washington/Portland Oregon area has been working towards responsible media programming and reporting.

Last Halloween season I called one of our local TV networks to protest a 30-second soundbite that portrayed a violently grotesque Halloween scene which included a dummy with a large butcher knife coming out of the side of its head and mutilated bodies strewn all over the lawn. The sadness of the soundbite was that the news commentator's statement about a body that was pinned to the ground and had a pitchfork stuck in its back as "the pitchfork was a nice touch". The man in the newsroom, who spoke to me about my complaint, completely disregarded my concern about the violence depicted in this scene and the station's irresponsible position of encouraging children to go to this home to view this "Halloween" scene. He felt I was over-reacting and that this was "just in fun". I still haven't been able to figure out what is fun about mutilation, blood and gore, and unless the media is held to being accountable for their part in the escalation of violence among our youth, the public-at-large will continue to suffer the consequences of not addressing this issue. I have a tape of that particular scene which was aired on KOIN-TV-Portland, Oregon on October 19, 1994. If the commission would like to view it, I would be happy to share it with you. Look at it and judge for yourself if this was "just fun".

How do we make the media more responsive to the public? The answer to this question lies in educating the public. Our children imitate the behaviors that they are taught. This idea has been around for centuries. It is not new. However, what runs the media (all of aspects) is money and greed. How is this addressed? I readily admit I don't know how to deal with this aspect of human nature.

I would like more information about your proposed rule-making.

Very truly yours,  
Jeanne Lipton  
2614 I Street  
Vancouver, WA 98663

FAX (360)695-8281  
Home phone - (360)737-3676

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## Youth and Violence Study

### Page 2

### **YOUTH AND VIOLENCE STUDY**

An image of violent, gun-toting American children running rampant and out-of-control down the streets and alleyways terrorizing entire cities and suburban areas in America exists not only in the minds of Americans but has become an international image as well.

The group of youth involved in the escalation of violence in our society today totals 5% of the entire population of young people. It is important that this percentage is kept in mind throughout this study because the time and attention given to the youth and violence by the media, social and scientific studies, and public commissions and associations has led the public to feel that 95% of young people today are violent and 5% are gentle law-abiding citizens. Media attention focusing on incidences of shootings, gang fights, stabbings and general unrest in the schools has struck fear into the heart of every citizen in America.

Is it surprising that we should be so fearful of violent acts? After all, Americans have always settled disputes by a show of strength and firepower; the good guys (us) vs. the bad guys (them). In history classes, students are asked to memorize dates, places and reasons for the major wars America has engaged in since the Fourth of July 1776. Hollywood movies, TV news, cartoons, newspaper stories, commercials and popular toys glorify combat (violence) in one form or another depicting the same repetitive theme: the good guys (us) vs. the bad guys (them). Historically, violence is not new to Americans nor to all of humankind for that matter. But...what is making us stop and take a good hard look at ourselves is that more and more young people are engaging in acts of violence and, perhaps, a growing fear that the existing 5% population of violent offenders will, in fact, come to be the norm.

Out of this growing concern for our children's future, the League of Women Voters of Clark County proposed Youth and Violence as our 1994-95 local study. This study will address the following issues:

- the causes and effects of youth violence;
- assistance/intervention programs;
- gaps in services; and
- future needs as determined important for effective results.

### **CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF YOUTH VIOLENCE**

According to a survey of Clark County juvenile offenders, the following information was compiled:

- One in six carried a weapon during the crime;
- Six in ten have family members with a criminal history;
- Four in ten have families with drug addictions or serious mental health problems;
- Four in ten suffer from abuse, neglect or serious family conflict of some kind;
- One in four has educational disabilities;
- Half have school attendance problems; and
- One in three has emotional problems that requires either medical or psychological help.

### **Socialization through Domestic Violence**

The primary way a child learns about violence is in the home in the form of **Domestic Violence**. Many studies into the backgrounds of incarcerated violent criminals reveal a profile of a childhood steeped in sexual, physical, mental/emotional, or negligence/abuse; alcohol or drug use/abuse by one or more parent; a lack of basic reading, writing and math skills; poverty, and a hopelessness about the future. Domestic violence **crosses all classes of society** and its long term effects on children is devastating. What a child sees a child imitates. Children coming from abusive homes learn how to control their environment by acting out their anger and rage in the same manner as their abusers. The following is an example of the abuse cycle:

## Youth and Violence Study

### Page 3

In the YWCA videotape "Hostages at Home", we meet five-year-old Christopher, his sister, and his mother Melody who are living in a women's shelter in Seattle, Washington. The cycle of abusive relationships for Melody began with her abusive father. Her education came from her second abuser; her daughter's father. This man taught her about "the streets, drugs, and prostitution." After leaving this man, she became involved with Christopher's father. When Christopher was a toddler, he saw his father terrorize his mother by putting a gun to her head and threatening to pull the trigger. It was at this point Melody came to realize she needed help. She contacted a women's shelter in Oklahoma and the network moved her and her children from Oklahoma to the YWCA Women's Shelter in Seattle, WA.

Melody's Battered Women's Recovery Program assisted her by teaching her to help herself. She joined programs that taught her about a clean and sober lifestyle, parenting skills, and the effects of domestic violence on her children which she came to understand fully when one day her son, Christopher came over to her and put one of his toy guns to her head saying he was going to shoot her. Looking into the barrel of the toy gun, Melody realized the full impact of what had happened to her son and how she was perpetuating the cycle of violence. She came to understand how she encouraged Christopher to be and think violently because she was the one who bought his "gun collection". Excerpts from this video will be played at the study meeting, so be sure to come and find out what happened.

Society needs to understand and face 1) the reasons a women stays in an abusive relationship and 2) the reasons that create the violence that keeps "the family hostage" in order find solutions and lower incidences of violence children witness or experience in the home. Some of these reasons will be presented, and the committee encourages you to bring along your knowledge about this subject to help this discussion.

### Socialization Through the Media

The second way children learn about violence is by **exposure to violence through the media**. It has often been stated that the "new breed" of young violent offenders are remorseless and unfeeling.

"Matthew Delapair, research coordinator for the National Coalition on TV Violence, asserts that watching TV violence has a detrimental effect on children. One effect is a 'desensitization to watching violence and sexually degrading behavior,' which is then taken into real life...Delapair says that '...viewing violence helps foster the belief in children that such behavior is normal and acceptable. "(Coping with Violence and Weapons, p. 64.)

The toy and television industries of today have joined forces to link toys and TV programs making them very powerful agents in our children's socialization process. Boys are taught to be strong, powerful, competitive, and even violent through G.I. Joe, the Ninja Turtles Nintendo, and The Mighty Power Rangers. Girls are taught two central themes - feelings and appearance - through the everlasting Barbie doll series, My Little Pony, and the Care Bears who live in the "Forest of Feelings". Boy color schemes are generally army camouflage, bold reds and black. Little girl toys are generally represented by mute pastel colors, primarily lavender and pink.

How influenced are our children by what they view on television every day looking for answers to help them define their roles in our society? An incident in the country of Norway which resulted in the death of a young girl was so similar to one of the Power Rangers episode that the government has put a ban on this program and its accompanying toy products. After careful viewing and consideration, other European countries and Canada have banned these cartoons imported from America which glorify violent actions.

According to Leslie Ray, executive producer of "Fresh Prince of Bel-Air", "It's not our responsibility to police what children watch. Our job is to entertain." (*The Columbian*, 2-27-95, pA1). Yet, on February 22, 1994 a man jogging in Cascade Park was attacked by a group of teenagers. One of the witnesses told the police that the idea for the attack came after they watched the movie "Menace II Society". "One witness said the 'movie made everyone hyper' and there was some talk about 'jacking somebody up,' beating up an unsuspecting stranger 'and possibly killing him.'" One of the suspects in this attack was also interviewed for the gang series

## Youth and Violence Study

Page 4

The Columbian ran from March 6 - 9, 1994. Interviews and photos of gang members holding guns and smirking were spread across the front pages of the newspaper.

Brad Shumate, a member of the Hough community, wrote an editorial lambasting The Columbian for encouraging and contributing to the youth and violence problem. He wrote, "...the newspaper has unwittingly encouraged only more of the same behavior to revisit our neighborhoods--and perhaps with even more startling and troubling circumstances--so that gangs can keep themselves on The Columbian's front page. That is the kind of attention I suspect is probably important to the gang mentality." (The Columbian, March 13, 1994, p.B9). Mr. Shumate's prophesy came to life the very day his editorial appeared in the newspaper. On Saturday night, March 12, 1995, Roni Page was shot and killed by another teen-ager during a fight near the 29th Street bridge in the Shumway neighborhood. **Was this simply a case of our local newspaper reporting the news or did they contribute to the event?**

Consider the style of reporting violence in several of the most recent, prominent media news stories. First, the **Tonya Harding** Scandal that was so sensationalized the public was given an immediate bulletin every time Tonya sneezed. Second, the **O.J. Simpson** Trial where the media followed his white bronco down the L.A. freeway paralyzing the city including their international airport that even President Clinton's haircut couldn't match. Next was the **Susan Smith** news story. Have you wondered why the Smith story was not turned into the media ruckus that is now going on in Los Angeles? Were press conferences held and sensationalized each time the sheriff's office found a clue which brought them closer to the solution of their case? When it was revealed that the mother did this to her children media and public outcry about "how could a mother do this to her children" were blasted across America. Compare this outrage to the public outcry reported, just last week, in the media about little Roxanne Doll whose murdered body was found buried in Everett, Washington after she was missing for one week. Do you have opinions about these cases? Please come prepared to voice them?

On June 17, 1994 an editorial appeared in our local Clark County newspaper, The Columbian, "Our Streets are Awash in the Blood of Children". The main thrust of the article was to make the public aware of the easy access to firearms by children whose lack of maturity and carelessness make them easy prey for a tragic ending to their own lives; combine a gun with a child's carelessness, immaturity and lack of understanding equals tragedy. Yet, two weeks earlier, on June 2, 1994, there was a full blown color photo on the front page of The Columbian Metro section showing a five-year-old boy manning a machine gun in a re-created D-Day field camp in England. Does this type of picture glorify the use of violence or is it justifiable because it was a D-Day symbol?

"Nonviolence by males is thought to be sissy, cowardly, unmanly--even womanly." (Coping with Violence, p.27) The competitiveness to beat the other fellow in whatever way is necessary is courageous, strong and masculine as demonstrated by advertisements linking sports figures to popular clothes, sneakers and sports equipment. In the Nike commercials starring Dennis Hopper he tells the audience (young boys and men) that football player Bruce Smith "does bad things, man bad things." One can only presume that one of the bad things is flattening the other teams' quarterbacks making Nike a shoe for all-around aggression and the threat of violent "bad things." There's even a shoe called Aggression and according to John Leo of the U.S. News & World Report, "Given the level of street violence, this sort of theme is amazingly irresponsible." He goes on to say that "Many ads today frankly exploit the growing weaknesses of society, pushing impulsiveness, self-obsession and aggression. Few of the advertisers are called on their behavior. It is hard to stand up on small but crucial issues without looking like a crank." He quoted Bob Garfield, a columnist for Advertising Age, who states that the awful Nintendo campaign "encourages kids to vent hostility toward parents and society. Among the recommended hostile acts: Turn the volume up as far as it goes...and show all-around contempt by spitting in the general direction of the entire world." Both of these ideas are in a 42-image, 30-second television spot. He referred to this campaign as a "...grotesque manipulation of our children's psyches. These people have no right to speak to our children this way, and they had damn well better stop."



## Youth and Violence Study

### Page 5

Parents demonstrate aggressive behavior while watching or being involved in their children's sports activities by standing on the sidelines swearing, yelling, being visibly angry and disappointed and even, at times, being kicked off the field because their aggressively bad sportsmanship has gotten completely out of control. The professional fields of boxing, football, ice hockey and soccer are prime examples of male socialization that encourages beating your opponent in whatever way is necessary to be number one. After a favored team wins, the fans take it upon themselves to express their pleasure in a violent frenzy as a front page photo in The Columbian on April 4, 1995 demonstrates.

### Socialization Through Family Values

In the **good old days**, when living in an **extended family** situation was the norm, children and parents were in an enviable position. The responsibilities of the children were shared by family members. Grandparents were available as role models for lesser experienced parents. If parents needed to work or simply wanted an afternoon away from the children, other family members were available to take care of them. This resulted in children remaining in the "home" and not in the hands of strangers. If one member of the family was out of work for a period of time, the family as a whole covered the loss until another job was found.

Our society went from the extended family concept to the **nuclear family** of ma, pa and the kids. With the nuclear family came the freedom to bring up one's kids without any interference from the outside, and freedom from the confines of the structured, social setting of an extended family where members had to share what they had. The children became the responsibility of the mother and money and things were provided by the father. When parent needed to work or an afternoon away from the kids, they were left with baby-sitters instead of family members.

At the present time, a **one-salary home** has become a thing of the past because in most families; it requires two incomes to support a car, a house, and to help provide a college education for children, etc. This has drastically changed family member roles. High cost for daycare has left families with no recourse but to provide a "**latchkey**" for their children until one or both parents come home. Unsupervised television sets are baby-sitting unsupervised children, as well as, unsupervised groups (gangs) becoming the unsupervised child's adopted family.

The other social change that has occurred over time is the divorce rate. Divorce has increased because it has become socially accepted for women to choose to leave a marriage, and laws have been changed regarding the distribution of marital goods including the "children". In the past, when a woman chose to leave her husband's home, she had to leave everything including her children because legally everything was "owned" by him. More women today are economically independent because of higher education and higher paying non-traditional careers.

In the domestic violence section, it is noted that many women stay an abusive situation. One of the most prominent reasons for this is economics. An educated woman earning a living wage can opt out of an unhappy or abusive marriage easier than a woman who has little or no education. She has no means of securing a job to support herself, let alone two children when, in these times as noted above, it takes two incomes in a functioning family to maintain a home. What happens to the children when their needs become a secondary issue in the family unit? Many of these children turn to outside sources for a "family", and they become prey for drug dealers, pimps and criminals. They get further enmeshed in the violence cycle, and the public pays in the form of more prisons and lack of safety on the streets. Children caught in this family situation see the drugs and violence as a way out of poverty see this family as a way out of their poverty and a means to get the things they lack.

These days it is popular to focus attention on **rebuilding family values**. However, this issue is **forgotten** when the public talks about poverty level, single-parent families. "Send those **lazy welfare mothers** out to work as soon as their babies are six years old," is the public outcry. But, all too often the only way for a family unit like Melody and her two children to break the violence cycle is by getting assistance through our social services

## Youth and Violence Study

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system. In this case, Melody didn't only receive money, she received peer support, parenting and domestic violence classes, resource information on child care, an opportunity for training to get a job that paid more than minimum wage, and a chance to overcome a violent lifestyle. If Melody didn't choose to change her lifestyle, her son may be one of those who sought out a gang as his family.

### Socialization Through Gangs/Peer Pressure

It is the banding together of a group of adolescents for the express purpose of acting out a violent lifestyle that is so frightening to the general public. Young people join gangs for a variety of reasons: a place to belong, sharing an identity within a peer group, having a chance to be somebody (even a negative somebody is better than being nobody), a place where "a boy can be a man", and some young people join gangs because they have been coerced or worried about not having protection, and for many it is an opportunity to gain wealth through illegal means. Most adolescents who join gangs do not see the dire consequences. They, as all youth are prone to, see only today, this moment. They don't understand that getting out of a gang is not an option. They have taken an oath of allegiance until death.

Children coming from non-violent homes can and do learn about violence from their peers. Toting guns to school has become a matter of protection as much as it is a show of power. Easy access to guns have created the "Children killing Children" fear that has swept across the county. Because of the public's fear of a rising crime rate, families and individuals are arming themselves. Children are getting guns mainly from their own homes or friends parents' homes. A child who brings a gun to school to show to other students is the center of attention. The sense of awe among classmates is euphoric. A child who has been on the sidelines can come to the forefront by displaying a gun s/he has brought to school from home.

### Teen Pregnancy

The public is quick to attack teen-age mothers without understanding that these are not powerful girls who are in equal partnerships. According to the statements below we are talking about adult men and adolescent girls. A 13-year-old girl, while her body may be mature, is not equipped to do mental combat with an 18-year-old teen-ager; nor is a 15-year-old girl on the same mental level as a 26-year-old man.

- Sociologist Elijah Anderson describes the "inner city sexual game" as girls having a dream about "being carried off by a Prince Charming who will love them, provide for them, and give them a family. The boys often desire sex without commitment or babies without responsibility for them."
  - 400 teen-agers are impregnated by men older than 25 every day;
  - two out of every three teen-age mothers are impregnated by a man over 20;
  - 30% of 15-year-old mothers have partners who are at least six years older.
  - 3/4's of girls who have sex before they are 14 say they were coerced;
- (*The Oregonian*, February 22, 1995, page C9.)

Rarely are the male counterparts of these pregnancies in the limelight. When they are mentioned, it is usually in the form of child support payments to their offspring. Is this a solution to this problem? Society as a whole as a moral obligation to protect and defend our young, which includes adolescent girls.

### Schools

Little attention has been given to the progressive form of education that became popular from the mid-50's and continues today. Students are passed through from one grade to another even if they haven't mastered the skills of the previous class. The popular belief was/is that a child's self-image is damaged beyond repair when s/he sees their classmates climb ahead of them, but no one has questioned this child's image of himself or herself when they have passed through 12 years of schooling and can't read, write or do math. A child's first introduction to reading should come from parents who sit the child on their lap and read stories and introduce

## Youth and Violence Study

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sounds and symbols. Often times in a dysfunctional family, this foundation is not made and children come to school ill-prepared or a child is simply not mentally mature enough to master certain skills in the early years of schooling and passing these children through to the upper grades invites failure; a failure which we have seen is not easily overcome. Parents, educators, law-makers have expressed concern about what happens to a child's ego when "left back" and his/her classmates go forward. However, ask any child in any classroom who the smartest student is, who the class clown is, or who the low-man-on-the-totem-pole is; they know. Our young are, also, astute enough to know that they don't have to do anything to succeed in class because they will be passed through the system anyway. This problem must be addressed.

Another problem that kids talk about is their loss of identity in large schools. Student discipline problems are difficult to solve in "factory schools". At our League of Women Voter Legislative day meeting the director for the Center for the Improvement of Student Learning spoke. When asked about smaller classrooms and smaller schools he stated that he understood "factory schools" contribute to a student's loss of identity, but to create smaller schools and smaller classrooms would "cost too much money".

At the National Education Service Foundation Forum televised in February Jesse Jackson made the following observation: "I went to Carver High School in New Orleans...I noticed there was no air conditioning, the sidewalks were broken, and out in the playground the basketball boards didn't have rims or nets on them. Six blocks away was a 1st-class jail. This jail:

- was warm in the wintertime; and cool in the summertime;
- provided organized recreation; adult supervision; balanced meals, 24-hour medical care;
- had a library; and
- parents were relieved because there will be no drive-by shootings because guns can't get into the jail.

Something is wrong when for the men of our youth the jail becomes a step-up and a reward as opposed to a step-down. Things are that far in chaos."

## CONCLUSION

Our children are and should be our most valuable natural resource and yet:

- Pre-school teachers, who take care of our children during their most formidable years, earn approximately \$4.25 an hour and are usually required to work a 40-hour week;
- In many school districts elementary school teachers get paid less and work longer hours than do secondary teachers;
- Full-time university professors make approximately \$40,000 a year for 12 semester hours of work a week;
- Computer repair companies charge \$200 per hour (minimum) to give technical advice about or to repair your computer; and
- More money is spent on prisons than on higher education in this country.

At the National Education Service Foundation Forum, **Sara Brady of the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence** stated, "...in all of violence reduction there is no one simple solution, but from the time a child is born through the time they're ready to make their way into the world, we must make sure they're safe, we must make sure they're loved. Without that safety, without a safe haven of home being safe, school being safe, there is no way these children can learn and better themselves." (National Education Service Foundation C-SPAN, 11/7/94).

## SOLUTIONS

At the study group meeting please bring any information you may have that will help us come to a consensus about what are the responsibilities of children, families, schools, neighborhoods, community groups, media and government services. Some thought provoking questions will include but not limited to:

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- Should parents be accountable and charged for the crimes their children commit?
- Is a curfew an effective tool for combating late night youth problems ? i.e. Yakima County.
- How should schools be involved in the process of helping our youth?
- Are more jails and harsher penalties the answer for juvenile offenders?
- Should we have smaller schools and classes?
- In what ways should the community provide a safe haven for its children?
- How or should we provide parenting skills to prepare our youth for their future families?

At the study meeting we will discuss what the roles the family, neighborhood, community, schools, government agencies, and media should play in terms of creating a healthy environment for our children, and ourselves.

\* \* \*

Committee Members: Jeanne Lipton, Coordinating Chair  
Brenda Evans, Carol Hansen, Ethel Lehman and Jo Woodruff

\* \* \*



## Roosevelt School District No. 403

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OCT 16 1995

93-48

### SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Bob Juris, Chairman

Denise Morris

Bob Hanan

Gail Hutchins

Nancy Pace

### SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Arthur L. Hoisington

October 5, 1995

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
1919 M Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Gentlemen:

This letter is written in response to an article in the September 11, 1995, issue of U.S. News and World Report entitled, **Sex and Violence on TV**. My understanding is that the commission will review comments through October 16, 1995.

On behalf of the school directors and staff of Roosevelt School, we respectfully request that a strong message be sent to the television networks, Congress, and any other affected parties that sex, violence, and vulgarities should not be shown on TV during the so called "family hour".

Most of us in the United States abhor censorship. However, there are the issues of sensitivity to "good taste" and family values. Young children do not need this constant exposure to violence, mayhem, and sex which has become so prevalent on TV.

Some network executives may argue that a free market will produce better TV than a regulated market. Thus far, there is little evidence to support that argument. What the producers of TV programs need is a conscience that causes: (1) TV that educates instead of TV that titillates; (2) TV that depicts wholesome individual and family values versus TV that includes generous portions of sex, violence, mayhem, and dysfunctional families; and (3) programs that are worth watching because of their educational or uplifting qualities.

Our children are important to us! They are the future of this society. TV has the potential to be a positive influence in our society while it entertains us. Additionally, in our opinion, the sponsors of TV programs have a moral obligation to support only wholesome, quality programming for children.

Our suggestion is that sponsors should withdraw their support for TV programs that continue the inclusion of sex and violence. If they fail to do so, parents need to unite and simply unplug the television set.

Most sincerely,

Arthur L. Hoisington  
Superintendent

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From students at

Hawthorne Elementary

JIM RILEY, INSTRUCTOR

4750 LEHRER DR.

SAN DIEGO, CA 92117-1399

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September 25, 1995

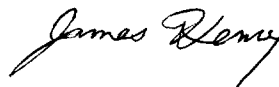
FCC MAIL ROOM

Dear Federal Communications Commission,

I think children's television should not be changed. It is the parent's responsibility to control their children. I believe that there should be many educational programs like Sesame Street and Mister Rogers Neighborhood, but I also think there should be social/entertainment shows. Clearly, shows like "Bevis and Butthead" and "The Simpsons" have no moral value because they teach children nothing, but I think they should stay on the air for entertainment. As for violence, I do know there are many programs on television which shouldn't be televised but their cancellation wouldn't change much since there is already so much violence on the News programs. I doubt that the News will be eradicated from television.

Overall, educational shows should be on television more often, but I find that the pure entertainment programs should not be removed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Henry".

James Henry

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OCT 16 1997

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FCC MAIL ROOM

I believe that many kids watch too much T.V. My mother limits me to eight hours a week, except shows that we watch together. I can't watch Prime Time unless we watch it as a family, or my mom or dad says I can. We have a chart and every time I watch something I have to cross out a square. Some show that I like are "The X-Files", "America's Funniest Home Videos", "Star Trek" and almost everything on Nickelodeon, except Nick Jr.

I think that there is too much violence on T.V. I think that it influences kids to fight and not talk things over. One example is the "Power Rangers". They just kill the other guys. I think that this program should be taken off the air, because kids who watch it will start hurting people instead of talking with the about it.

The government should not interfere with this and put on more education, because they can't make kids watch it. I think that the parents should limit it.

Sincerely,  
ERIC BATCHELOR AGE 10



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OCT 16 1995

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Dear FCC, FCC MAIL ROOM

I think increasing the quantity of educational and informational television programs is a great idea because it gives people who watch too much television an opportunity and selection for educational television viewing.

There are so many shows that are inappropriate for children 16 and under who watch a lot of television. For instance, soap operas and talk shows have a lot of yelling and are full of peoples' personal problems. MTV has a lot of inappropriate music and a violent, vulgar show called Bevie and Butthead. I once heard of a little boy who was watching Bevie and Butthead and he was inspired by it and burned his house down with his baby sister inside. Another similar show is called Ren and Stimpy which is disgusting and offensive. There aren't enough shows that are educational on television. The only shows that I am familiar with are Mr. Wizard, Reading Rainbow, Mr. Rodgers, National Geographic, and Sesame Street. The idea of having more types of these programs for kids my age (10), is very good.

My parents don't allow too much television viewing in our house because my parents say we can't learn enough from it.

I would like to receive more information about the children's television programming.

Sincerely,  
Hillary Ruggles